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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/088,085	06/05/2002	Bernard Vandenhende	221021USOPCT	7107
22850	7590	12/27/2005		
OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND, MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C. 1940 DUKE STREET ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314			EXAMINER BOYKIN, TERRESSA M	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1711	
DATE MAILED: 12/27/2005				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b> 10/088,085	<b>Applicant(s)</b> VANDENHENDE ET AL.	
	<b>Examiner</b> Terressa M. Boykin	<b>Art Unit</b> 1711	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

#### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 June 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 4-9 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All    b) ☐ Some \*    c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)   | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>3/02/9/04</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

### ***Claim Objections***

Claims 4-9 are objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c) as being in improper form because a multiple dependent claims 1-8. See MPEP § 608.01(n)

### **Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103**

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

**Claims 1-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over USP 3836486 abstract, cols. 2-4 and claim 1.**

The reference discloses reusable vinyl chloride polymer and copolymers which are reclaimed from scrap plastics by contacting the scrap plastic with a solvent for the vinyl chloride polymer, contacting the resulting liquid phase with a substantially non-aqueous non-solvent for the polymeric portion and then separating the resulting insoluble phase containing the vinyl chloride polymer. It is noted that the reference discloses that

“Water should be excluded as much as possible from the system. Should the plastics feed contain or absorb water, ***the water should be substantially removed, as by azeotropic distillation***”. It goes on to discuss that “water is undesirable because *it has been observed that water will seriously alter the rate of separation of the components*, thus making the process uneconomical.”...[***but not impossible***]. It is

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also noted that it is well understood by the examiner that:

A prima facie case of obviousness may be rebutted by showing that the art, in any material respect, teaches away from the claimed invention. In re Geisler, 116 F.3d 1465, 1471, 43 USPQ2d 1362, 1366 (Fed. Cir. 1997).

However, the instant case, nonetheless, does in fact demonstrate that the water *is absorbed by the plastic, i.e. vinyl chloride scrap*, and that the removal of water via azeotropic distillation is well known and may be accomplished since by doing so a separation of the plastic is accomplished.

Further, the reference clearly refers to the first solvent as being a solvent and the second as being a “non aqueous” solvent” thus allowing for the first solvent to be an “aqueous” which could contain a certain amount of water. Since applicants claims do not specify the amount of water to be employed, the first solvent may thus inherently be aqueous and thus contain “water” would continue to make obvious that claimed invention. Consequently, since the reference acknowledges that water obviously causes the absorption and that the first solvent may be an aqueous solvent, containing water therein, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made that the employment of water as one method of separation or recycling the vinyl chloride although perhaps not economically beneficial. Consequently, the claimed invention cannot be deemed as unobvious and accordingly is unpatentable.

### **Correspondence**

Please note that the cited U.S. patents and patent application publications are available for download via the Office's PAIR. As an alternate source, all U.S. patents and patent application publications are available on the USPTO web site ([www.uspto.gov](http://www.uspto.gov) <<http://www.uspto.gov>>), from the Office of Public Records and from commercial sources. Applicants may be referred to the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at <<http://www.uspto.gov/ebc/index.html>> or 1-866-217-9197.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Examiner Terressa Boykin whose telephone number is 571 272-1069. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday from 6:30am to 3:00pm.

The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306. The general information number for listings of personnel is ( 571-272-1700).

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

tmb

  
Examiner Terressa Boykin  
Primary Examiner